

It is wonderful that, at this great crisis, Jehovah should have stooped to suggest to His people that they should borrow ornaments from the Egyptians. We must remember that the Israelites were going out of Egypt to worship God. It was not fitting that they should go forth to that great function arrayed like slaves. They must have suitable apparel and ornaments. These they could obtain only from their Egyptian neighbors. The readiness of the Egyptians to help, encouraged them to borrow. The transaction was a loan, although it was understood on both sides that the borrowed goods might not be returned. Back of the transaction lay the conviction of the Egyptians that all they could give was a poor return for centuries of toil and the willingness of the Israelites to be debtors to those who at length were showing signs of sympathy and good-will.

It is a great mistake to suppose that God singled out Pharaoh, or that He ever singles out any one and says, "I will harden his heart;" and then proceeds to do it. The supposition is monstrous. But the solemn truth is this, that by the operation of that well-known law, according to which the soul becomes less and less susceptible to impressions which have been resisted, God hardens the heart of every man and woman that does not yield to Him. How many men are "gospel-hardened" as it is fitly

called. They have so often listened to the appeals of the gospel without yielding to them that their hearts have become as "hard as the nether mill-stone."—Gibson.

Light from the East

JEWELS OF SILVER AND GOLD—The Hebrews were instructed to act as all Orientals do, and ask a present at parting, to reward their past services and provide for the expenses of the journey. Personal ornaments of silver and gold are much more generally worn by men and women in the East than among us. Besides, under Eastern despotisms, the possession of all forms of real estate and merchandise is more or less insecure, and down to recent years there were no banks; so, what people saved must be in a form which could be easily hidden about the person or in the ground. Again, a wife may be divorced at any time and her dowry disputed, but no one can take away from her what she has on her person at the time. So she is constantly adding to the strings of coins on her hair and round her neck, not only to gratify her vanity but to provide for her wants should she be sent away. The dirtiest and most miserable Arab has often a small fortune in a knot of his girdle or in some secret hole in the ground. So when every family in Egypt was smitten, when it seemed a matter of life and death to get rid of Israel, the secret hoards and personal ornaments were everywhere freely sacrificed to get them away.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

As the representative of Jehovah, Moses dealt with the tyrant, and instructed and guided the oppressed people, ch. 4: 29-31. Hence we have in this lesson special communications to both parties.

1. *God's message which Moses was to tell "in the ears of the people,"* v. 2. (a) This is introduced as a parenthesis in the historical narrative. The concluding address of Moses to Pharaoh begins with the 29th verse of the 10th chapter, and is continued at the

4th verse of the 11th chapter. Between these parts we have what is addressed to the people. The last decisive plague is about to be inflicted. The Israelites are thus to be released, to be "thrust out," and therefore it is necessary that they should be told what to do to be prepared for the final movement. (b) They are all to carry out instructions formerly given to women only, ch. 3: 21, 22. "Let every man borrow," etc., v. 2. The Hebrew term *lahvah* rendered "borrow" literally means to ask, to solicit. The Egyptians were in a measure terrified into granting the requests referred to by the signal judgments they had suffered. (Com-